

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 26, 2020

Russian National Sentenced to Prison for Operating Websites Devoted to Fraud and Malicious Cyber Activities

A Russian national was sentenced today to nine years in prison for his operation of two websites devoted to the facilitation of payment card fraud, computer hacking, and other crimes before Senior U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III in the Eastern District of Virginia.

Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney G. Zachary Terwilliger for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Special Agent in Charge Matthew S. Miller of the U.S. Secret Service's Washington Field Office made the announcement.

According to court documents, Aleksei Burkov, 30, ran a website called "Cardplanet" that sold payment card numbers (e.g., debit and credit card numbers) that had been stolen primarily through computer intrusions, victimizing hundreds of thousands. Many of the card numbers offered for sale belonged to U.S. citizens. The stolen credit card data sold on Burkov's site has resulted in over \$20 million in fraudulent purchases made using U.S. credit card accounts.

Burkov also ran another website that served as an invite-only club where elite cybercriminals could advertise stolen goods, such as personal identifying information and malicious software, and criminal services, such as money laundering and hacking services. To obtain membership in Burkov's cybercrime forum, prospective members needed three existing members to "vouch" for their good reputation among cybercriminals and to provide a sum of money, normally \$5,000, as insurance. These measures were designed to keep law enforcement from accessing Burkov's cybercrime forum and to ensure that members of the forum honored any deals made while conducting business on the forum.

Burkov was arrested at Ben-Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel in December 2015. An Israeli district court approved his extradition in 2017. He was extradited to the United States from Israel on Nov. 11, 2019, after appeals to the Israeli Supreme Court and the Israeli High Court of Justice were denied. On Jan. 23, 2020, he pleaded guilty to one count of access device fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit access device fraud, identity theft, computer intrusions, wire fraud, and money laundering.

Senior Trial Attorney Laura Fong of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kellen S. Dwyer and Alexander P. Berrang of the Eastern District of Virginia prosecuted the case. The Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs provided significant assistance in securing the defendant's extradition from Israel.

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Department of Justice. Learn more about the history of our agency at [www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years](https://www.justice.gov/Celebrating150Years).